

officials, NGOs, and UN personnel began talking about the possibility and logistics of an independent investigation. Meanwhile, in Thailand, the Royal Thai Government (RTG), concerned that such an outcry would jeopardize its policy of engagement with the SPDC, ordered those NGOs that participated in compiling the report to close their offices indefinitely.

Although License to Rape has received a notable amount of attention, the international community, including officials from various governments, suggested to Refugees International that additional evidence could assist in generating further action. It is important to ask why. Some suggested that a report about the experience of indigenous women, compiled by indigenous women, could not be objective. Others proposed that the report, written by a small, unknown group, was not credible enough.

The authors of this report reject those propositions. Few are as well-qualified to document and describe rape as those women from the brutalized communities. International advocacy without grassroots knowledge, participation, and decision-making is of extremely limited use. Consequently, the purpose of this report is not to "bolster" the claims contained in License to Rape. Rather, the purpose is both to support and build on the movement and activity generated by SWAN, and to expand the scope of understanding regarding the brutal phenomenon of rape in Burma to include a broader profile of ethnic nationalities. License to Rape documented the widespread use of rape against Shan ethnic women. Rape is not confined to Shan State or to Shan women. The Burmese military uses rape against many ethnic nationalities for the express purpose of brutalizing "insurgents," quashing ethnic dissent, and demoralizing and destroying ethnic communities.

Refugees International decided that our approach would be to broaden the scope of the Shan report by investigating the prevalence of the Burmese military's use of rape against other ethnic groups. RI's field mission focused the research on the Karen, Karenni, Mon, and Tavoyan ethnic groups. In applying our expertise in international advocacy on behalf of war-affected populations, RI sought to examine the extent of the use of rape against a variety of Burma's ethnic nationalities and determine if the abuses were widespread and/or systematic.

Karen, Karenni, Mon and Tavoyan women and men, as well as several Shan individuals, were courageous in sharing their personal stories and observations. From the 26 individuals interviewed, 43 rapes or attempted rapes were described, 23 of them confirmed by victim or witness testimony or physical evidence. Stories of rapes and other human rights abuses and the resulting mental and physical ailments dominated the interviews. Individuals still in pain from torture and beatings talked about the violations suffered by them and their families and friends. For many, the decision to leave Burma was clearly tied to the rape and other abuses they and their family members had experienced. One survivor spoke for many when she said, "To this day, I cannot sleep at night thinking about what happened." The time is ripe for the international community to hear their voices and take action.

SAN BENITO MARINE PFC. JUAN GARZA

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 10, 2003

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a fallen soldier who grew up in San Benito, Texas: Marine PFC Juan Garza, who we learned yesterday was killed in action by sniper fire as his unit was taking and holding the Baghdad airport.

The price we are paying as a Nation is high in terms of loss of life in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Already, sons of South Texas have been killed and wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan, with another still unaccounted for in the Iraqi theatre. PFC Garza was the most recent loss for our community.

Garza, who served with the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines Regiment, was killed Monday evening by enemy sniper fire while patrolling the Baghdad airport just outside the Iraqi Capital. His mother said he was shot in the chest and died instantly. PFC Garza was based at Camp Pendleton, Calif., where he was an expert marksman and broke shooting range records there in boot camp.

PFC Garza was always a sportsman, competing in football and track. His friends and family remember him for his humor and his target practice. He always aspired to be in the military, and probably got the bug for service from watching the military movies he loved. He was also inspired to join the service by his grandfather, who served in the United States Army.

He grew up in San Benito, but moved to Michigan to live with his aunt and uncle. After graduating from Summerfield High School in Temperance, Mich., Garza enlisted in the Marines and was stationed at Camp Pendleton.

He loved his country and he loved the Marines. Like most people who join the service, he wanted to help people, to make the world a better place. The world is lonelier today without Juan in it, but the work he did will indeed make it a better place.

On the day after Christmas, 2002, he married his sweetheart, and was deployed to the Middle East the next day. This was a tragedy on so many levels. PFC Garza is survived by his young wife, Casey; his parents, Mary Ann and Juan Guadalupe Garza; his baby half-sister, Stephanie Rae Castillo; and his aunt, Jodi Bucher of Temperance, with whom he lived in Michigan.

I ask my colleagues to remember Juan Garza's family today, to pray for them as they absorb this enormous personal loss. I also ask that we all continue to pray for the safety of the men and women we have sent to do this dirty, difficult task of ridding Iraq of dangerous weapons of mass destruction.

ADDRESS OF DEMOCRATIC LEADER NANCY PELOSI TO THE AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 10, 2003

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to an excel-

lent speech given a few days ago by Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI, my colleague, friend and neighbor in California. Her address was given at the recent Conference here in Washington of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, an organization of Americans who see strong American ties with the State of Israel as a vital element in our nation's vital interest.

Mr. Speaker, Leader PELOSI's position on terrorism was clear and unequivocal: "There is no place in the civilized world for terrorism. Not now. Not ever. . . . No injustice, real or imagined, can ever justify, and no future can ever be built upon, the calculated slaughter of innocents." She was emphatic: "The world must never accept in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, or Haifa what the world would not tolerate in London, Washington, New York, or San Francisco." These words must be the basis of our country's efforts to bring peace to the Middle East.

Congresswoman PELOSI understands that peace cannot come through "lowering the threshold for the cessation of violence" and any roadmap for peace in the region must, in her words "be based on real change on the ground, not artificial dates on the calendar."

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to read Congresswoman PELOSI's excellent address.

ADDRESS OF DEMOCRATIC LEADER NANCY PELOSI TO THE AMERICAN ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Good morning. My, how this group has grown. Congratulations.

Cissie Swig, thank you so much, first for that warm introduction, but more importantly for your friendship and your mentioning of me over the years and for your leadership on so many issues. I cherish our friendship.

President Amy Friedkin, a dear friend for so many years. It has been wonderful to see Amy rise within your great organization, from the East Bay Federation and the Northern California chapter of AIPAC, all the way to become the national President.

I am thrilled that Amy is the first woman to be President of AIPAC. And with president-elect Bernice Manocherian, perhaps it is the beginning of a wonderful trend. I commend AIPAC for breaking down another barrier and leading America closer to the ideal of equality that is both our heritage and our hope.

Cissie and Amy will appreciate this story. My daughter is Catholic. My son-law is Jewish. Last week, I celebrated my birthday, and my grandchildren—ages four and six—called me to sing Happy Birthday. And the surprise, the real gift, was that they sang it in Hebrew.

I'm so pleased to be joined by three of my colleagues—Congressman Howard Berman of California, Congressman Sander Levin of Michigan, and Congressman Bob Matsui of California. All are strong supporters of Israel. Thank you to all the members of AIPAC, especially those who have traveled so far from California and the Bay Area. The special relationship between the United States and Israel is as strong as it is because of your fidelity to that partnership and the commitment of every person in this room today.

I am honored to be here to speak about something that can never be said enough: America's commitment to the safety and security of the State of Israel is unwavering.

Today, the thoughts and prayers of all Americans are with our courageous forces in Iraq. Americans may have had our differences going into this war, but we are